J. H. Brookes

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A DEFENSE OF VERBAL INSPIRATION

BY

JAMES H. BROOKES.

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CHAFF AND WHEAT.

The judgments of God fell upon His people, because they listened approvingly to teachers who did not speak according to His word. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord." It was this that provoked His righteous displeasure. "Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. The anger of the Lord shall not return, until He have executed, and till He have

performed the thoughts of His heart: IN THE LATTER DAYS YE SHALL CONSIDER IT PERFECTLY."

Is He indifferent to the testimony of those who mislead their followers by their own fancies? "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed." The knowledge of the divine will, which they claimed to receive in dreams, may have been imparted to others in the most attractive form. Their discourses may have been adorned with all the graces of oratory, with all the beauties of poetry, with all the energy of reason, with all the force of the highest criticism and the broadest culture; but still they had no greater authority than a dream. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." Jer. xxiii. 16–28.

How far the prophets were inspired, who did not tell a dream, but spoke the word of God, and how far we are bound to receive their testimony, can be easily ascertained. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Scripture means *writing*, and the word here employed, *graphe*, is never used of any writings except the Sacred Scriptures. A writing is composed of words, and therefore the apostle declares that all the words of Scripture are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for teaching.

It is true that the Revised Version translates it, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching;" and false prophets have taken advantage of this rendering, as friends of the Bible clearly foresaw, and as illustrated in the recent defence

of Professor Briggs before his Presbytery, to insinuate that *some* Scripture is not inspired of God. But the learned chairman of the Revision Committee, defending the new translation, says, "It enunciates the vital truth that every separate portion of the living book is inspired, and forms a living portion of a living organic whole;" and Prof. Gaussen declared that "this last construction would even give more force than the first to the apostle's declaration."

It may be well, however, to add that many eminent scholars do not agree with the reading of the Revised Version. The American Bible Union translates it, "All Scripture is inspired by God, and is profitable for teaching." McKnight translates it, "The whole Scripture is divinely inspired, and is profitable for teaching." Dr. Young, author of the Analytical Concordance of the Bible, translates it, "Every writing is God-breathed, and profitable for teaching." Rotherham translates it: "Ev-

ERY Scripture is God-breathed, and profitable unto instruction." The Emphatic Diaglott translates it, "All Scripture, divinely inspired, is indeed profitable for teaching." J. N. Darby translates it, "Every Scripture is divinely inspired, and profitable for teaching." Even the Unitarian Version by Dr. Noyes, Professor in Harvard University, translates it, "All Scripture is inspired by God, and is profitable for teaching."

The word *is*, being in italics, does not of course belong to the original, and the question arises, where shall it be placed? Shall we read with the Authorized Version, "All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," or with the Revised, "Every Scripture inspired of God *is* also profitable?" Against the latter there are four insuperable objections. First, it separates between two adjectives that are immediately connected in the Greek by the conjunction *and*, so closely connected in-

deed that if one is a predicate, the other is necessarily a predicate also. *Theopnustos kai ophelimos*, God-inspired and profitable—by what rule of grammar can anyone insert *is* between these adjectives?

Second, the apostle never could have written such a useless truism as to assert that "every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable." The mind instantly and instinctively recognizes that, and does not need a divine revelation to teach a self-evident fact. Who would think of saying that "every loaf of pure bread is also good for food?"

Third, the translators of the Revised Version flatly contradict themselves. Here we have the phrase, *pasa graphe theopnustos kai ophelimos*, which they render, "Every Scripture inspired of God *is* also profitable." But in another passage, where the same verb is left out, we have *panta gumna kai tetrakeelismena*, which the Authorized Version renders, "all things *are* naked and

opened," and the Revised renders in the same way; "all things *are* naked and laid open." If the translators of the latter had been consistent, they would have rendered it, "all things naked *are* also laid open."

Fourth, they cannot plead the necessity of translating *pasa graphe* "every Scripture," because it is in the singular number, for they translate *pas oikos*, which is also singular, "all the house," Acts ii. 36. We may assume, therefore, that the old rendering is the best, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" and rejoice in the assurance that the writing and very words were under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

But we are by no means left to the testimony of one witness to prove the verbal inspiration of the original Scriptures. It is affirmed more than two thousand times, and as Robert Haldane truly says, "Nothing can be more clearly, more expressly, or more precisely taught in the Word of God. And while other important doctrines may be met

with passages of seeming opposition, there is not in the language of the Scriptures one expression that even appears to contradict their plenary and verbal inspiration."

"For the prophecy came not in old time [margin, at any time] by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. i. 21. The Revised renders this, "No prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost." If the will of man was left to select the language in which revelation is clothed, the evidence of the apostle is not true, for he says, "no prophecy ever came by the will of man," and he also declares that holy men of God spake, not thought, but spake, employed words, "had utterance from God," as Alford renders it, being moved, or borne along, by the Holy Ghost.

Turning then to the Old Testament, and accepting its threefold division, recognized by our Lord Himself, into the law of Moses,

the Psalms, and the Prophets, we ask what do the men whom God used to make known His truth say of their inspiration? Moses tells us that Jehovah sent him with a message to Pharaoh and to the enslaved Israelites, and that he recoiled from the dangerous and disagreeable service, exclaiming, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth?" God did not ask, who hath made man's mind, but man's mouth? "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." Ex. iv. 10–12.

The divine promise was not, I will be with thy mind, and teach thee what thou shalt think, but, I will be with thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt say. It does not concern us in the least to know what Moses thought, but it concerns us for eter-

nity to know what Moses said; and five hundred and sixty times in the Pentateuch we are told that "the Lord said unto Moses," "the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." Hence the solemn admonition just before the people crossed the Jordan, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it." Deut. iv, 2. It was a perfect word, and hence unchangeable, because it was the word of God. Seven times does Moses tell us that "the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables;" and if this is not true, the witness is a common liar, worthy only of contempt. If it is true, God employed, and recorded and uttered human words to give expression to His commands.

Passing to the second division of the Old Testament, known as the Psalms, we find David the prominent medium for communicating the divine will, as Moses was in the first division. "Now these be the last

words of David." If ever man is honest, it is while speaking his last words, and they are often properly regarded as important. Listening then to the last words of "the sweet psalmist of Israel," we hear him saying, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue." 2 Sam. xxiii, 2. He does not testify that the Spirit of the Lord thought by him, but spake by him, nor does he declare that the ideas of the Spirit were in his mind, but His word was in his tongue, so that in the marvelous writings, which have stirred the hearts of God's people for thirty centuries, and of which, Mr. Gladstone says, "All the wonders of the Greek civilization heaped together are less wonderful than is the single book of Psalms," he was the mouth-piece of the Holy Ghost.

No wonder he everywhere exalts the word as perfect, as making wise the simple, as rejoicing the heart, as enlightening the eyes, as enduring forever, as true and right-

eous altogether, as more to be desired than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Ps. xix. In the longest Psalm of the collection, containing 176 verses, the Scriptures under their seven leading titles of the Word, the Law, the Testimonies, the Statutes, the Commandments, the Judgments and the Precepts of God, are celebrated in every verse but one, and there Christ is mentioned as the surety of the believer. Well might John Ruskin say, "The 119th Psalm has now become of all, the most precious to me in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the Word of God."

"Thy word is true from the beginning," exclaims the happy Psalmist, or "true from the first word," as it is rendered by Dr. Adam Clarke. The Statement is often made in these days by learned professors, that the Bible contains "many errors and mistakes;" but it is shamefully false. In answer to the blasphemous and infidel assertion David

shouts back from his dying bed, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue;" "Thy word is true from the first word;" and then looking up into the face of God, he declares, "Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name," Ps. cxxxviii, 2; or above every other manifestation of Thyself in nature, reason and the church. This second division of the Old Testament closes with the announcement and admonition, "Every word of God is pure, He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Prov. xxx, 5, 6.

The third division brings us to the prophets, of whom Jeremiah may be taken as a representative. When he was informed that he was ordained a prophet unto the nations, "Then said I, Ah! Lord God! behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall

send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." But how was he to receive what God commanded him to speak? "Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put My words in thy mouth."Jer. i, 6-9. Mark, God did not put His concept into the prophet's mind, nor somewhere behind the Scriptures like a bat darting about in the dark, but He put His word into Jeremiah's mouth, and more than one hundred and eighty times he came before the people, thundering in their ears, "Thus saith the Lord."

So it is with all of the prophets without exception. Every one of them appears with the announcement that "the word of the Lord" came to him, and that it was the word of the Lord, not his own word which he delivered in admonition, entreaty or instruction, But "they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of Hosts

had sent by His Spirit by the hand of the former prophets; therefore came there great wrath from the Lord of Hosts." Zech. vii. 12. More than fifteen hundred times in the prophetical parts of the Old Testament do we read, "Thus saith the Lord," or its equivalent, and twenty-four times in the four short chapters of Malachi we hear the searching and significant refrain, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts."

Must all of this go for nothing at the demand of the higher critics, who are trying to substitute their idle dreams and empty chaff for the living word of the living God? Are we to believe the writers of the Bible, or the men who are seeking to pick the Bible to pieces by a process of criticism that would destroy the authenticity and genuineness of any of their own writings, or of any book that has ever been published? If any one wishes to see a specimen of the reasoning adopted by these higher critics, let him read Archbishop Whately's book, "Historic

Doubts," in which he proves that Napoleon never lived. They come before us with the fanciful discovery of their German masters, who have dreamed of Elohistic and Jehovistic documents, and redactors and subredactors, until one becomes amazed at their audacity, and indignant at their irreverence, and longs to turn upon them with the shout, "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." Rom. iii. 4.

Precisely the same truth of inspired words is brought out in the New Testament, as shown by the use which our Lord made of the Scriptures. Three times in His temptation He defended Himself against the assaults of the devil, by saying to him, "It is written," quoting from the book of Deuteronomy, which higher criticism pronounces to be a forgery and a fraud. It is our Lord who declared, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled, Matt. v. 18; or not the least Hebrew letter,

not the smallest turn or twist of a letter can be set aside. It is our Lord who declared that "the Scripture cannot be broken," Jno. x, 35, the writing itself remaining immutable as Jehovah's throne. He would not summon angels to His help in Gethsemane, for "how then shalt the Scriptures be fulfilled?" Matt. xxvi. 54. He would not consent to bow His head in death on Calvary's cross, until He told of His thirst, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled." Jno. xix, 28.

On three different occasions He gave explicit directions to His apostles, that when brought before kings and councils as witnesses for His truth, they were not to premeditate, not to prepare their defense, not to give themselves the slightest concern, "for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you," Matt. x. 20; "It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost," Mark xiii. 11; "The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what

ye ought to say." Lu. xii. 12. Accordingly, on the Day of Pentecost they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance," Acts ii. 4, proclaiming in more than a dozen dialects, with which they had been totally unacquainted up to that moment, the wonderful works of God.

"Which things also we speak," wrote Paul, "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," I Cor. ii. 13, claiming that the very words he employed were communicated to him by the Holy Spirit. Hence the man who called himself the least of the apostles, I Cor. xv. 9, and six or seven years later, less than the least of all saints, Eph. iii. 8, and two or three years later still, the chief of sinners, I Tim. i. 15, could also say with authority, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord," I Cor. xiv. 37;

and "he therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit." I Thess. iv. 8.

Then Peter writes concerning the redemption to be preached to the world: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when He [the Spirit] testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." I Pet. i. 10, 11. Here the prophets are represented as earnestly studying the words they themselves had written, like amanuenses poring over a discourse dictated to them by a master mind, in order to discover its meaning. This is followed by the exhortation, "Be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." II Pet. iii. 2; placing the commandment of the

apostles on the same high plane of authority with the words of the prophets, who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

John closes the uniform testimony of the Bible with the announcement, "We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us: he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error," I Jno. iv, 6; and he completes the canon of Scripture with the solemn admonition, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. xxii. 18, 19. Thus from beginning to end does the Lord guard His word from the rash intrusion of false prophets with their dreams and chaff.

The sacred writers without even one exception, declare that they spoke and wrote the words God gave them to deliver, confirming the truth of the statement made by Dr. Lindsay in his fine Commentary on Hebrews, "The words of the prophet are God's words; the words of Christ are God's words, and the words of the men sent forth by Christ are God's words." It is foolish, therefore, to talk about a theory of inspiration. One may as well talk about a theory of the incarnation or the resurrection of our Lord. It is not a theory but a fact that all the writings or words of Scripture are given by inspiration of God; and Dean Burgon, one of the ablest scholars of Great Britain, was precisely correct when he said, "The Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth on the throne. Every book of it, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every word of it, every syllable of it, every letter of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High."

The grotesque dream that the thoughts are inspired, but not the words, the poor chaff that inspiration is found in the concept, but not in the language, he dismisses with merited contempt. "You cannot dissect Inspiration into substance and form. As for thoughts being inspired, apart from the words which give them expression, you might as well talk of a tune without notes, or a sum without figures. No such dream can abide the daylight for a moment. No such theory of inspiration is even intelligible. It is as illogical as it is worthless, and cannot be too sternly put down." Prof. Henry B. Smith says, "This inspiration is plenary in the sense of extending to all the parts, and of extending to the words also." Prof. Shedd says, "Scripture itself asserts verbal inspiration." Dr. Charles Hodge says, "The inspiration of the Scriptures extends to the words." Prof. A. A. Hodge and Prof. B. B. Warfield say, "The line of inspired or not inspired, of infallible or

fallible, can never rationally be drawn between the thoughts and the words of Scripture." Bengel says, "Even the words of Scripture are inspired by God," and "The Spirit does not speak without words." Bishop Ryle, of Liverpool, says, "I believe that the inspired writers were infallibly guided by the Holy Ghost, both in their selection of matter and choice of words." Dr. Anderson, member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, and a profound Bible student, says, "Not only is this divine inspiration plenary, but it is *verbal* also." Mr. Spurgeon and twenty-nine others, including some of the ablest preachers and scholars of England, say in a recent manifesto, "We—are constrained to avow our firmest belief in the verbal inspiration of all Holy Scripture as originally given."

Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge, in his masterly defence of the Bible before the University of Virginia, speaks of the hundreds of years required for its completion, of the

strangely different writers who were employed in its construction, of the vast variety of topics upon which they dwelt, and then asserts without fear of contradiction, "Yet all these men, through all these centuries, treating of all these subjects, so wrote, that although they have been subjected to the fiercest scrutiny during more than seventeen centuries since the last of them died, it has been impossible to detect the smallest solecism in the entire productions of all of them put together, or the smallest discrepancy of fact, of principle, or even of opinion of any one of them from any other throughout their voluminous writings."

The Bible everywhere claims that it is the truth and nothing but the truth. "Thy law is the truth," says the Psalmist in the Old Testament, Ps. cxix, 142. "Thy word is truth," says the Lord Jesus in the New Testament, Jno. xvii, 17; and there is not a line in conflict with these testimonies from Genesis to Revelation. Even Archdeacon

Farrar, although he rejects the great fact of verbal inspiration, does not hesitate to say in italicised words, of the writers of the Bible, "That they *did* so err I am not so irreverent as to assert, *nor has the widest learning and acutest ingenuity of skepticism ever pointed to one complete and demonstrable error of fact or doctrine in the Old or New Testament.*"

In sad contrast with the evidence of this important witness comes the testimony of Prof. Briggs in his famous Inaugural Address; "It is not a pleasant task to point out errors in the sacred Scriptures. Nevertheless, historical criticism finds them. . . . Conservative men should hesitate before they force critics in self-defense to make a catalogue of errors in the Bible." Again he says in his Biblical Study, "Higher criticism comes into conflict with the authority of Scripture, when it finds that its statements are not authoritative and its revelations are not credible." Every infidel in the world can

readily believe the Bible on these terms, conceding to him the right to discover errors and to reject statements which in his judgment are not authoritative, and revelations which he is pleased to regard as not credible. It is perfectly obvious that the position taken by the Professor leaves us no Bible at all; and his threat to publish a catalogue of its errors would end as a thousand similar attempts have ended, in the merest chaff. Nothing could please lovers of the Word more than to have him publish his catalogue of errors, for they would soon show that he has been boastfully telling a dream of his own vain imagination.

He is followed by his fellow-laborer, Prof. Harper, in the effort to destroy faith in the word of God, for the latter says, "It seems a hard thing to accept—how a man can admit the existence of historical and scientific errors in the Bible and still hold to the Scriptures as the infallible, inspired word of God on all matters of faith and

practice. The errors are there, and those who see them may also accept the Bible as divine." Yes, it is indeed a hard thing to accept, so hard that it cannot be done, how a man may admit that there are errors in a book, and at the same time hold that the book is infallible, inspired and divine. No being in the universe can make these propositions harmonize. It might as well be said that black is white, or a lie is the truth, or the devil is an angel of light.

The Professor published an elaborate article, borrowed wholly from Prof. Robertson Smith, who borrowed wholly from the German Kuenen and Wellhausen, seeking to prove that the Elohistic and Jehovistic accounts of the deluge are contradictory. An aged minister of the gospel published a reply that smashed his argument to pieces, and made it "like the chaff of the summer threshing floors." The Professor did not deem it wise to notice the overwhelming demonstration of his own folly, but con-

tented himself with a declaration of his love for the Bible. To this the old man answered, "The most unsatisfactory point of all your letter is where you say, 'I do not in my own mind in the slightest respect diminish the claims of the Old Testament upon our esteem and affection'; and your co-laborers Prof. Briggs, etc., are constantly explaining that all Bible blunders and forgeries alleged 'do not impair its inspiration!' This may be so in your 'own mind' as you say; but I can only believe it at the expense of undervaluing the good sense of such a mind."

Just so. These gentlemen would try and persuade us that the Pentateuch is made up of conflicting and irreconcilable documents, that Deuteronomy and Leviticus are gross forgeries, not written for a thousand years after Moses, although everywhere bearing the name of Moses, and yet that the books are infallible, divine and inspired. It is stated as a fact that an American informed

Wellhausen of the position taken by the American professors, who look to him as their teacher, and that the German infidel, after a moment of silence, said, "I have undoubtedly proved the books to be forgeries, but it never occurred to me to make God Almighty a party to the fraud." The only possible way to admit the sincerity of the professors in their boasted admiration of the Bible is to deny them the possession of common sense.

Even they will confess that God could have kept the writers of the Scriptures from error; that He did not is inconceivable. If historical criticism, or higher criticism, or lower criticism, or the devil's criticism, can detect one real error in the original manuscripts of the Bible, it is obvious to every reflecting mind that we have no Bible left, and no Christ, who put the seal of his sanction upon the least letter of it, and upon what are called its unhistorical and unscientific narratives, and certified to its inerrant

accuracy in the statement, "Scripture cannot be broken," and "Thy word is truth." If there are errors, who is competent to point them out? Who will separate the chaff from the wheat? Who will tell us what to believe? Alas! the professors, just mentioned, have left their followers tossing upon the dark sea of time without chart or compass; and there is not a church of any size in the country that has not already felt the frightful evils of their false teaching.

Only remember what the word of God does for us, and then think of the daring presumption of the man who tells the people that it contains numerous "errors and mistakes."

1. By it we are begotten. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures." Jas. i. 18.

2. By it we are born again. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." I Pet. i. 23.

3. By it we grow. "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." I Pet. ii. 2.

4. By it our souls are saved. "Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." Jas. i. 21.

5. By it we are made wise unto salvation. "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." II Tim. iii. 15.

6. By it we are cleansed. "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you." Jno. xv. 3, R. V.

7. By it we are sanctified. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Jno. xvii. 17.

8. By it we are built up. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Acts xx. 32.

9 By it we are washed. "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for her,

that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word." Eph. v. 25, 26.

10. By it we are defended against spiritual wickedness. "The sword of the spirit. which is the word of God." Eph. vi. 17.

12. By it we are kept from the paths of the destroyer. "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer," or, as Dr. DeWitt renders it, "By the word of thy lips, I have shunned the paths of oppressors." Ps. xvii. 4.

12. By it our path through life is lighted up. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Ps. cxix. 105.

13. By it God accomplishes His will. "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. lv. 11.

14. By it we are made to rejoice. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and

thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jer. xv. 16.

15. By it we are warned. "Moreover, by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them is great reward." Ps. xix. 11.

16. By it obstacles are removed and scattered. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Jer. xxiii. 29.

17. By it the seed is scattered that must result in a harvest of weal or woe. "The seed is the word of God." Lu. viii. 11.

18. By it the secrets of all hearts are revealed. "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. iv. 14.

19. By it every blessing that comes from the hand of our Father is made sacred; "for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." I Tim. iv. 5.

20. By it an all-sufficient and only rule of faith and practice is provided. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Lu. xvi. 31.

21. By it unbelievers are to be judged. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Jno. xii. 48.

Such is a mere glance at some of the things the word of God is said to do; and when we consider our relations to it, and our dependence upon it at every step through life and into eternity, it is marvelous that men, professing to be its friends, can rise up before the church and the world, and propose to catalogue its errors. But the surprise is increased, and our conviction of its inerrant inspiration is deepened, when we reflect upon its names.

1. It is often called the word of God,

because God is its author. "They preached the word of God." Acts xiii. 5

2. It is called the word of the Lord, because Jehovah Jesus is its subject. "When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord." Acts xiii. 48.

3. It is called the word of Christ, because it sets forth the Anointed One in His person and offices. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Col. iii. 16.

4. It is called the oracles of God, because it is the word which God spoke. "Unto them were committed the oracles of God." Rom. iii. 2.

5. It is called the word of faith, because it is to be believed. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thine heart that is, the word of faith, which we preach." Rom. x. 8.

6. It is called the word of truth, because it is truth without admixture of error. "In

whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth." Eph. i. 13.

7. It is called the word of life, because it imparts life to the believer. "Holding forth the word of life." Phil. ii. 16.

8. It is called the faithful word, because it is credible and unchangeable. "Holding fast the faithful word." Tit. i. 9.

9. It is called the word of grace, because it makes known God's unmerited kindness to the lost. "Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of His grace." Acts xiv. 3

10. It is called the word of reconciliation, because it tells of a God reconciled and reconciling the world unto Himself; "and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." II Cor. v. 19.

11. It is called the word of salvation, because it shows the way and the only way by which men are saved. "To you is the word of this salvation sent." Acts xiii. 26.

12. It is called the word of righteousness, because therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. "Every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness." Heb. v. 13.

13. It is called the word to be preached, because nothing apart from it, nothing beyond it, nothing short of it is to be proclaimed. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, and by His appearing and kingdom; preach the word." II Tim. iv. 1, 2.

14. It is called the word of prophecy, because it alone shines through the gloom and reveals what lies in the future. "We have the word of prophecy more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise, in your hearts." II Pet. i. 19. No wonder the apostle writes, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye

received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." I Thess. i. 13.

Can it be that such a word is the word of men, and a partaker of their ignorance and errors? It is as far above them, both in thought and expression, as the heavens are higher than the earth. For eighteen hundred years it has been read, and studied, and prayed over, and wept over, and thousands and hundreds of thousands of volumes have been constructed out of it, and to-day it remains as fresh, and unexhausted, and inexhaustible as ever. Unlike any book in the world, the more it is searched the more profound becomes its meaning, and there is literally no end of its new disclosures of truth to those who descend beneath its surface into the depths of the riches both of its wisdom and knowledge. However much any one of us may

know of its most familiar passage, there is more for us to learn from that one passage than has been discovered thus far by all the scholars.

What Prof. Drummond says of a law of nature is not true of that, but it is certainly true of the Bible. "There is a sense of solidity about a Law of Nature which belongs to nothing else in the world. Here, at last, amid all that is shifting, is one thing sure; one thing outside ourselves, unbiased, unprejudiced, uninfluenced by like or dislike, by doubt or fear; one thing that holds on its way to me eternally, incorruptible and undefiled." If the Professor had substituted for "a law of nature" "the word of God," he would have been entirely correct; especially as he soon after says, "What these laws are in themselves is not agreed. That they have any absolute existence even is far from certain." Here then by his own confession all is shifting and uncertain, but the believer can joyfully

exclaim with the Psalmist, "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. cxix. 89.

You cannot improve a single verse of Scripture by clothing it in language of your own. Every word is carefully weighed, and is precisely the word that ought to be employed. There is no mistake, no carelessness, no lapse of memory in the use even of the least particle, although consisting of only two letters; and the slightest change would often destroy the sense and pervert the meaning, Clement, the apostle Paul's fellow-laborer, and several of the so-called "Fathers," blundered fearfully when they illustrated the resurrection of the body by the fable of the phœnix rising out of its own ashes; but the writers of the Bible committed no such blunder, nor can higher criticism lay its finger upon the slightest discrepancy between any statement of these writers, and any ascertained and accepted fact in history, geography or science. All

is divinely accurate, divinely inerrant, and divinely perfect.

Thomas Campbell, the poet, in his beautiful story of Gertrude of Wyoming, lays the scene in the State of Pennsylvania, and yet in ignorance of the climate and latitude he writes, "how might you the flamingo see," and "the crocodile, the condor of the rock," and "buffalo remote low'd far from home," and "hills with high magnolia overgrown." Why is there no anachronism like this in the Bible? Similar slips are found in the writings of the world's greatest authors; but why are they not found in the Scriptures? If it is said that it was necessary to preserve prophets and apostles from such stupendous mistakes, in order to render the revelation of God's truth credible, why could not the same power preserve them from small mistakes, and why do not small mistakes vitiate its credibility?

Or, if Prof. Briggs can "make a catalogue of errors in the Bible," or Prof. Harper has

discovered "the existence of historical and scientific errors in the Bible," let them point them out, instead of sending forth their unsupported and untrue assertions. If they cannot make good their charge, as they cannot, then let them leave the humble Christian in quiet possession of the only Book that convinces him of sin, that tells him of salvation through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, that gives him victory over evil, that guides him in perplexity, that comforts him in sorrow, that cheers him on a dying bed, that dismisses his spirit into eternity in hope of a blessed immortality, that promises him a glorious resurrection.

It is sad enough to know that these professors seem to be at present sailing before prosperous gales. The secular press, and a vast proportion of the church and her ministry, laud them to the skies, or preserve a discreet silence with regard to their monstrous heresies. They are following in the wake of the German critics, who have

dreamed that Moses did not write the Pentateuch; that David did not write even one of the Psalms, for they were all composed five hundred years after his death; that Solomon did not write Ecclesiastes; that Isaiah did not write more than half the book that goes by his name; that Zachariah did not write his prophecy; that Daniel was not written until the times of the Maccabees; that the Gospel of John was not written by John, and the Second Epistle of Peter is to be rejected. Well might the question be asked of our dishonored Lord, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" and well might He reply, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." Zech. xiii. 6.

The wave of German skepticism that is flowing over our land and invading our colleges and theological seminaries, is one of the darkest signs of the times, and bodes terrible disaster for ourselves and our children. "Shall I not visit for these things?" saith the Lord; "shall not my

soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely; and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Jer. v. 29, 31. It is now as of old, when God complained, "My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me. So, I gave them up to the hardness of their own hearts [or imagination]; and they walked in their own counsels. Oh, that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! * * * He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee." Ps. lxxxi. 11, 16.

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